

Agricultural Marketing Service
Fruit and Vegetable Division
Fresh Products Branch
Agricultural Commodity Aid (Fresh Fruit and Vegetable)
GS-1981-04

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INTRODUCTION

This position is located in a Field Office of the Fruit and Vegetable Division, Fresh Products Branch, Agricultural Marketing Service. The incumbent assists Agricultural Commodity Graders in performing inspection and grading work on fresh fruits, vegetables, and related products at various terminal market sites such as warehouses, railroad sidings, packing plants, and similar facilities. Assignments may involve details and/or reassignment to a different geographical area as determined by management. This is a bridge position. The employee performs duties designed to provide knowledge of grading and inspection concepts, methods, and practices as well as to acquaint the employee with Division and Branch procedures. Training involves both formal instruction and on-the-job training.

II. MAJOR DUTIES

Under close supervision, selects representative samples from product lots in accordance with prescribed sampling procedures and plans.

Performs case stamping and checkloading functions.

Prepares grading worksheets and records inspection and grading results as dictated by the Grader.

Studies instructional material, official standards, and related regulations which govern the sampling, grading, inspection, and certification of fruits and vegetables. This includes any appropriate reference material on marketing, production, and botany. While observing the grading work, receives instruction in sampling and determining general product quality, and on recognizing specific product defects and diseases.

III. FACTORS

Factor 1. Knowledge Required by the Position

The ability to learn about fruits and vegetables and their characteristics as well as standards and regulations relating to their grading and inspection.

The ability to develop skill in maintaining interpersonal relationships with industry personnel.

Skill in following detailed instructions for sampling.

Factor 2. Supervisory Controls

The Officer-In-Charge or designated Grader provides the assignments, giving detailed instructions on what methods and procedures to follow in accomplishing the work and on what to study.

The Aid strictly adheres to the instructions. Any questions or problems which arise are referred to the supervisor.

Work such as sampling, checkloading, etc. is closely reviewed in progress and upon completion. Work is checked for compliance with instructions and adherence to procedures.

Factor 3. Guidelines

Written guidelines include parts of the official grade standards, regulations, visual aids, instructional training material, technical manuals, and other written guidelines provided locally. However, the Aid is provided with the specific guidelines appropriate to the phase of work to be done. These guidelines are further explained to the employee while the work is performed.

The employee adheres closely to the guidelines and instructions. Assistance is readily available and must be sought for any questions or problems.

Factor 4. Complexity

The work involves following methods and procedures which are closely related. The technical factors necessary to consider are made relatively apparent and are readily verified. Variations in the work stem primarily from the particular type of fruit or vegetable being sampled.

Factor 5. Scope and Effect

The work involves the study of fruit and vegetable related materials such as reference guides and official standards and procedures. As the Aid becomes more knowledgeable, he/she may perform sampling, checkloading, and lot stamping under close supervision.

Any technical work performed affects the accuracy and reliability of the work performed by the Graders.

Factor 6. Personal Contacts

Contacts are primarily with Graders and fruit and vegetable wholesalers, handlers, and their employees.

Factor 7. Purpose of Contacts

Contacts with industry employees are to obtain cooperation in facilitating sampling, checkloading, and lot stamping work.

Factor 8. Physical Demands

Fruit and vegetable sampling, checkloading, and lot stamping requires periods of physical exertion to lift and move boxes and cartons of product often weighing more than 50 pounds. Physical coordination and manual dexterity are necessary to perform examination of products and to safely enter and leave rail cars, trailers, and trucks. Ability is required to detect abnormalities in the commodity through normal or corrected vision in at least one eye for distance, depth perception, and color. The employee must be able to insure his/her safety in a highly mechanized and/or noisy environment through adequate or correctable hearing. The incumbent must have the ability to determine product quality through smell and/or taste when necessary.

Factor 9. Work Environment

The work environment includes exposure to adverse outdoor weather; working in refrigerated areas; and exposure to fumes and odors from coolants.